

LAHOMA

The Story of a Little "Mountain Country"
Girl Who Wanted to Become "Civilized"

JOHN BRECKENRIDGE ELLIS

(Copyright, 1913, by John Breckenridge Ellis.)

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Brick Willock, an outlaw in the west, and the life of a better man, Gladstone, and the child find refuge among Indians. Gladstone moves into a tribe whose chief, Red Feather, then brings Lahoma to Willock's camp. Lahoma and her mother, the outlaw, Willock, and his son, Atkins, are the little girl, and the crowd older Lahoma expresses a longing to become "civilized." Brick promises that he will shall be granted. They educate her as best they can. A cowboy, Willock's cousin, finally takes her to call on her. Brick and Atkins persuade this, but only on condition that Willock shall come to the village as soon as he can himself. Lahoma is left with her. Finding that he loves her, Willock goes away. Years later, when he is in a better circumstance, he returns to find that Lahoma has gone east with friends and is having a gay time at a house party at the home of a wealthy second Gladstone. She learns he is her cousin, and she goes back to the village. Lahoma meets Willock.

CHAPTER XII.

(Continued.)

Like Lovers.

"How did you know?" he returned, pleased and thrilled by her glowing brown hair, her eloquent eyes, her warm-tinted cheeks, her form, as erect as of yore, but not so thin—as pleased and thrilled as if all these belonged to him. "How did you know me?" he repeated, looking and looking, as if he would never be able to believe that she had turned out so much better than he had ever dreamed she would.

"Oh," said Lahoma, "when I looked into your face I saw myself as a girl sitting under the cedar trees in the cave with Brick and Bill."

"Just you three?" demanded Willock, smiling.

"Oh!" exclaimed Lahoma, showing her perfect little teeth as if about to bite, in a way that filled him with fearful joy, "and so they showed you that letter!"

"Just you three?" repeated Willock. "Just room enough in the cave for you—and Brick—and Bill?"

"Listen to me, Willock, and I will do the talking."

"Well?"

She lowered her voice to a whisper—"Lean your head closer."

She whispered in his ear, "Red Kimball came on this train—there he is—he hasn't seen me yet—in another coach."

"Well?"

"S-h-h! He knows me, for he was a porter in our hotel. When he sees he'll know I've come home to wear Brick. S-h-h! Then he'll try to keep me from doing it. Look—some of the gang are speaking to him—they've been waiting here to meet him—they'll go with him, I expect. We'll all be in the stage coach together!"

"What do you want me to do to see Lahoma?"

"I want you to pretend that you don't know me—and they mustn't find out your name is Compton, or they'll think Mr. Edgerton got word to you to join me here. Be a stranger till we're safe in the cave."

"All right. Goodbye—but suppose I hadn't come?"

"Oh, I could have done without you," said Lahoma. "Or I think I could."

"You could never have done without me!" Willock declared, "I could not!"

"I can right now—!" She drew away. "I'll get into the stage; don't follow too soon."

There were three stage coaches drawn up at a short distance from the platform, and Lahoma went quickly to the one bound for her part of the country. She was the first to enter; she was seated quietly in the corner when the two long seats that faced each other began filling up. The last to come were four men: one, tall, slender, red-faced and red-haired, two others of dark and lowering faces, who looked upon the former as their leader, and the last, Willock Compton, who had unobtrusively joined himself to this remnant of Red Kimball's gang.

The stage, which was built after the manner of the old-fashioned omnibus, afforded no opportunity of moving to and fro in the selection of seats, hence, when Red Kimball discovered Lahoma's identity—the exact moment of the discovery was marked by his violent start—she was safeguarded from his approach by her proximity to a very large woman flanked by a thin spinster.

At the first stopping place the passengers trooped into the stage office for a hasty meal. Lahoma had Compton detached themselves quickly from the rest and darted toward the stage barn. By means of a handsome deposit they obtained the use of two fast horses. Mounted on these, they were soon clear of the town.

"What a beautiful ride!" cried Lahoma.

"Fast as you please—I've never been left behind, yet!"

They galloped on in silence, Lahoma slightly holding back. Night rapidly drew on.

CHAPTER XIII.

Together.

BEFORE them the trail, beaten and rutted, stretched interminably, losing itself in the darkness before it slipped over the rounded margin of the world. As darkness increased the trail seemed to waver before their eyes like a gray scarf that the wind stirs on the ground.

In a wide detour they had endeavored to escape detection from the stage station, but sheltered by no appreciable inequalities of land, and denied the refuge that even a small grove might have furnished, they had, as it were, been held up to view on the prairie; and though so far away, their horses had been as distinctly outlined as two ants scurrying across a white page.

Willock reflected. "If Kimball when he came out of that restaurant, happened to look in this direction, he must have seen us; and the first inquiry at the barn would inform him who are on the horses." But he said nothing until, from the rear, came the sound long-dreaded, telling, though far away, of bounding horses and groaning wheels.

"Lahoma!"

"Yes—I hear them."

"My horse is about used up. We'll have to side-trail or they'll ride us down."

"I could go on," Lahoma answered, as she drew hard on the bit, "but I wouldn't like to leave you here by yourself."

"You couldn't travel that distance by yourself. And, good as your horse is, it wouldn't last. But thank you for thinking of me," he added, smiling in the darkness, as he dismounted. "Let me lead your horse as well as my own."

"No," said Lahoma, "if leading is to be done, I'll do my part." She leaped lightly to the ground and seized her horse. Side by side they slowly ventured from the trail into the invisible country on the left. They found themselves treading short dead tracks that did not greatly obstruct their progress.

The stage was rapidly coming up abreast of them, and Willock felt her grasp tighten. There was a flash of lights, a glimpse of the driver's face as of creased leather as he raised his whip above his head—then noise and cloud of dust passed on and the lights became trailing sparks that in a minute or two the wind seemed to blow out.

The wind increased in fury. Fortunately, it was at their back. Willock pressed forward on foot, leading Lahoma's horse, and, partly on account of awkward reserve, no more was said for a long time. Then came a gust of sleet. The sleet changed rapidly first to snow, then to rain—then hail, snow and rain alternated, or descended simultaneously, always driven with cruel force by the relentless wind.

At last Lahoma shouted, "It's a regular norther! How're you getting along, Willock?"

Despite their discomfort, his heart leaped at this unexpected note of comradeship. Had she already forgiven him for not loving Annabel? "Oh, Lahoma!" he cried, with sudden tenderness, "what will become of you?"

She returned gravely, "What will become of Brick? Northerners are bad, but not so bad as some men—Red Kimball, for instance. A terrific blast shook the half-frozen overcoat about her shoulders as if to snatch it away. "Don't you wish the Indians built their villages close to the trail? Ugh! Hadn't we better burrow a storm cellar in the sand? I feel awfully high up in the air!"

"This miserable heat won't move a foot. Come and hold him, Lahoma, while I examine him in front, to find out what's scared him."

"All right. Where are you? Can you find my hand?"

"Can't!" retorted Willock, clasping it in a tight grasp.

"Gracious, how wet we are!" she panted, "and blows about. And frozen."

"It's time now, Lahoma, time for you to be somebody's sweetheart."

"Oh, how trembly this horse is!"

"But, Lahoma!"

"Well, what is it?"

"I just wanted to say your name."

He started away. "It sounds good to me."

"Yes, it stands for Oklahoma."

"It stands for much more than that!" he called.

"Yes," she persisted in misunderstanding him, "something big and grand."

"Not so big," he cried, now at some distance, "but what there's room for more than Brick and Bill in the cave!"

If she answered the wind drowned her words. With extended arms he groped along the trail with exceeding caution. Suddenly his feet touched

OLD IRON AND BONES

Copyright, 1914, by The Free Publishing Co.
(The New York Evening World.)

By Robert Minor



an object which on examination proved to be a human body, a gaping wound in his breast.

"Found anything?" called Lahoma, her voice shivering.

He rose quickly and almost stumbled over another object. It was a second body, stiffened in death.

"I'll be there in a minute," he called his voice grave and steady. After a brief pause he added—"I've found one of the horses—it's dead."

"Oh, oh!" she exclaimed. "They've driven it to death."

Willock had found a bullet hole behind its ear, but he said nothing. Suddenly the horse held by Lahoma gave a plunge, broke away and went galloping back over the trail they had traversed, pursued by Lahoma's cry of dismay. "I couldn't hold him," she gasped. "He lifted me clear off the ground."

Willock was also dismayed, but he preserved an accent of calm as he felt his way toward her, uttering encouragement for which their condition offered no foundation. But his forced cheerfulness suddenly changed to real congratulation when his extended hand struck against an upright wheel. "Lahoma, here's the stage coach. It's standing just as we saw it last, except for the horses."

"The stage coach!" she marvelled, coming toward him. "Oh, Willock, I see now what's happened. One of the horses dropped dead, and Red Kimball and his men jumped on the other three. . . . But I wonder what became of the driver?"

"Get inside!" he ordered. "Thank God, we've found something that we can get inside of. That'll shelter us till morning, anyway, and then we can determine what's to be done."

Once in the coach, they were safe from the wind, which howled about and around them, rattling the small windows and making the springs creak. There was no help for the discomfort of soaking garments, but Willock lighted a reserve lantern and placed it in a corner, while thick leather cushions and stage blankets offered some prospect of rest.

Armed and watchful, Willock waited through the hours while Lahoma slept. When no longer able to bear the uncertainty, he crept from the stage with the lantern, and examined the recent scene of a furious struggle. There were only two slain—the driver and one of Red Kimball's companions. Either Kimball or his other comrade had escaped, or had been captured. If any of the attacking party had fallen, the bodies had been borne away. Blood stains indicated that more than two had been shot. From that ghastly sight it was a relief to find himself once more inclosed by the coach walls with Lahoma so peacefully sleeping.

Once he fell into a dose from which he was startled by the impression that soft noises, not of wind or rain, were creeping over the earth. He sat erect with the confused fancy that wolves were slinking among the wheels, were glaring up at the windows, were dragging away the corpses. The sudden movement of his hand as it grasped his pistol awoke Lahoma.

She opened her eyes wide, but did not lift her cheek from the arm that lay along the cushion. "Where you are," she said, "just as I was dreaming."

He pretended not to be uneasy, but his ears strained to catch the meaning of those mysterious movements of the night. Her voice cut across the vague murmur of the open plain: "You only came to see me once!"

Although her eyes were wide, she was apparently not half awake; not a muscle moved as she looked into his face. "I thought," she murmured, "it was on account of Annabel."

"I went away because I loved you," he answered softly. "I promised Brick I'd go if I felt myself caring—and nobody could help caring for you. That's why I left the country. Just as soon as we laughed together—it happened. That's why I didn't come again."

"Yes," sighed Lahoma, as if it was not so hard to understand now. "And that's why I've come back," he added. "Because I've kept on loving you."

"Yes," she sighed again. She closed her eyes and seemed to fall asleep. Perhaps it was a sort of knowing sleep that lost most of the world but clung tenaciously to a few ideas. The noises of the night died away. Presently he heard her murmur as a little smile crept about the parted lips. "The cave's pretty big . . . there's more room than I thought."

When she was wide awake again daylight had slipped through the windows. "Oh, Willock!" she exclaimed, sitting suddenly erect and putting her hands to her head mechanically. "Is—are we all right?"

"All right," said the young man cheerily. "There's a good deal of snow on the ground, but it was blown off the trail for the most part. Some friends have provided us with the means of going forward."

"But I don't understand."

"Well, finish the sandwiches and melt some snow for water, and then mount. Look—see those two Indian ponies fastened to the tongue of the stage? They'll carry us to the next station like the wind."

She stared from the window, bewildered.

"I don't know any more about them than you," he answered her thoughts. "But there they are and here we are." He said nothing about the bodies evidently carried away by those who had brought the ponies. "It's all a mystery—a mystery of the plains. I haven't unravelled the very first thread of it. What's the use? The Western way is to take what comes, isn't it, whether norther or ponies? There's much bigger mystery than all that filling my mind."

"What is that?"

"You."

She bent over the sandwich with heightened color. "Poor Brick!" she murmured as if to divert his thoughts. But his sympathy just then was not for Brick.

"Lahoma, you said that this is a subject a man should bring up."

She looked at him brightly, still flushing. "Well?"

"I'm bringing it up, Lahoma."

"But we must be planning to save Brick from arrest."

"I'm hoping we'll get home in time—note that I say home, Lahoma. I refer to the cave. I'm hoping we'll reach home in time to forestall Red

Kimball. We've lost a great deal of time, but Brick doubtless is safely hiding. And when we get to the journey's end—Lahoma, do you know what naturally comes at the journey's end?"

"No."

"A marriage."

"I thought that was what you meant."

"Will you marry me at the journey's end?"

Lahoma turned very red and laid down the sandwich. Then she laughed. Then she started up. "Let's get on the ponies!" she cried.

CHAPTER XIV.

Journey's End.

THE snow, that morning, lay in drifts from five to eight inches across the trail, and to the height of several feet up against those rock walls raising, as on vast artificial tables, the higher stretches of the Kiowa country. But by noon the plain was scarcely strewn with white, and when the sun set there was nothing to suggest that a snowflake had ever fallen in that sand-strewn world.

When the rude cabins and hasty tents of the last stage station in Greer County showed dark and white against the horizon of a spring-like morning, Willock cried exultantly: "The end of the journey!"

And Lahoma, suddenly showing in her cheeks all the roses that had opened in her dreams, repeated gayly, yet a little brokenly: "The end of the journey!"

The end of the journey meant a wedding. The plains blossom with endless flower gardens and the mountains sing together when the end of the journey means a wedding.

Leaving Lahoma at the small new hotel from whose boards the sun began boiling out resin as soon as it was well aloft Willock hurried after a fresh horse to carry him at once to the cave, ten miles away. Warning must be given to Brick Willock first of all. Lahoma even had a wild hope that Brick might devise some means whereby he could attend the wedding without danger of arrest, but to Willock this seemed impossible.

He had gone but a few steps from the hotel when he came face to face with his old fellow cowboy, Mizoo, now Sheriff of Greer County. Cutting short his old friend's outburst of pleasure:

"Look here, Mizoo," said Willock, drawing him aside from the curious throng on the sidewalk, "have you got a warrant against Brick Willock?"

Mizoo tapped his breast. "Here!" he said, "know where he is?"

Willock sighed with relief. "At any rate you don't," he cried.

"No—rat him! Where's your going, Bill?"

"I want a horse . . ."

"No use riding over to the cave," remarked his friend, with a grin. "That is, unless you want to call on some friends of mine—deputies; they're living in the dugout, just laying in for Brick to show himself."

"But, Mizoo!" expostulated Willock. "Why are you taking so much trouble against my best friend? The warrant ought to be enough; and if you can't get a chance to serve it on him, that's not your fault. Your de-

puties haven't any right in that cave, and I'm going to smoke 'em out. As for Red Kimball!"

"I wouldn't say anything against Red, old top, it ain't gentlemanly to call dead folk liars."

"Dead folk!" echoed Willock, starting up.

"Yes, he's dead. Wasn't it enough in the past for Brick Willock to kill Red's brother, but what he must needs collect his pals, stop the stage coach, shoot two men trying to get Red, and one of 'em the innocent driver? You say, yes. But hold on, that ain't all he done. No, sir. The very next day after Red swore out that warrant—and it was yesterday, if you ask me—what is saw, when we men of Mangum comes out of our doors? Three corpses lying on the sidewalk, side by side. You say, what corpses? Wait. I'm coming to that. One was that driver; one was the pard that got shot with the driver. The other was Red Kimball his own self."

"I knew the bodies had been carried away from the trail," exclaimed Willock in perplexity. He related his discoveries of the stormy night. "But you didn't know they had been brought to town all this dir. . . . to be laid beside Red. You didn't know Red had been stabbed so he could be added, too. You didn't know the three of them had been left on the street to rile up every man with blood in his veins. Why, Willock, it's an insult to the whole State of Texas. Such high-handed doings ain't to be bore. If Brick Willock don't want to be tried in court, is that an excuse for killing off all that might witness against him?"

Willock elaborated, for Mizoo's benefit, his theory of an Indian attack, described Brick's peaceable disposition, his gentleness to Lahoma—then dwelt on the friendship between himself and Brick and the relations between himself and Brick's ward.

Mizoo grinned good naturedly. "Yap. Well, we've got a clue locked up in jail right now that could tell us something. I judge, and will tell us something before set free: it's name is Bill Atkins, and it refuses to say a word about where Brick Willock is."

Willock, followed by Mizoo, hurried to the jail for a word with Atkins. The street in front of the jail was jammed with an angry crowd.

Mizoo whispered to Willock, "We'd better get in as quick as possible."

The words were lost in the increasing roar of voices. He spoke again: "When I swing open the door for it, you jump inside and I'll be after you like a shot . . . We'll lock ourselves in!"

"Hey, Mizoo!" shouted a voice from the crowd, "bring out that old cuss. Drag him to the platform, we want to hear what he's got to say."

"Say, Mr. Sheriff! Tell him if he won't come to us we'll go to him. We've got to know where Brick Willock's hiding, and that's all about it."

"Sure!" growled a third. "What kind of a town is this anyway? A refuge for highwaymen and murderers!"

A struggle took place at the foot of the stairs, not so good-naturedly as heretofore. A reasoning voice was

Next Week's Complete Novel
in THE EVENING WORLD
A TALE OF RED ROSES

By George Randolph Chester

This Book on the Stands Will Cost You \$1.35. You Get It for 6 Cents.

heard: "Just let me say a word to the boys."

"Yes!" called others, "let's hear him!"

But the deputies did not fire, and the mob, though chafing with mad impetuosity, did not advance. It was a single figure that swept up the steps, unobstructed, aided, indeed, by the mass of packed men in the street—figure slight and erect, tingling with the necessity of action to which every vein and muscle responded, tingling so vitally, so electrically, that the crowd also tingled, not understanding, but aware the man thrilled.

"Lahoma!" Willock was at her side. "Lahoma!"

"Yes, I'm here," she returned breathlessly, her face flaming with excitement. "I'm going to talk to these people—let me have that!" She took the revolver from his unresisting hand, uncocked it, and slipped it into her bosom. Then she faced the mob and held up her empty hand.

CHAPTER XV.

Facing the Mob.

IT was the first time Lahoma had ever faced an audience larger than that composed of Brick and Bill Willock.

The mob was awed by that light in her eyes, by her beauty, freshness of her cheeks, by her beauty, freshness and grace.

"I'm a Western girl," Lahoma said at last, "and ever since Brick Willock gave me a home when I had none, I've lived right over yonder at the foot of the mountains. I was there when the cattlemen came, before the Indians had given up this country; and I was here when the first settlers moved in, and when the soldiers drove them out. I was living in the cave with Brick Willock when people came up from Texas and planted miles and miles of wheat; and I used to play with the rusty ploughs and machinery they left scattered about—after the three years' drought had starved them back to their homes."

"Then Old Man Walker came to Red River, sent his cowboys to drive us out of the cave, and your—if I led the bunch. And it was Brick and myself that stood them off with our guns, our backs to the wall and our powder dry, and we never saw Mizoo in our cave again. So you see, I ought to be able to talk to Western men in a way they can appreciate, and if there's anybody here that's not a Western man, he couldn't understand our style, anyhow, he'd better go where he's needed, for out West you need only Western men—like Brick Willock, for instance."

Lahoma's manner changed; it grew deeper and more forceful.

"Men, I want to talk to you about this case—will you be the jury? Consider what kind of man swore out that warrant against Brick—killed the leader of a band of highwaymen! And who's his chief witness? You don't know Mr. Gladstone. I do. You've heard he's a rich and influential citizen in the East. That's true. But I'm going to tell you something to show what he is—and what Brick Willock is; just one thing; that's all I'll say about the character of either. As to Red Kimball, you don't have to be told. I'm not going to talk about the general features of the case—as to whether Brick was ever a highwayman or not; as to whether he killed Red's brother to save me and my stepfather, or did it in cold blood; as to whether he held up the stage or not. These things you've discussed; you've formed opinions about them. I want to tell you something you haven't heard. Will you listen?"

At first no one spoke. Then from the crowd came a measured, impartial voice: "We got lots of time."

Lahoma plunged into the midst of her narrative.

With no attempt at elocution, she told Brick Willock's story, beginning with his finding of Gladstone's wagon. She went on to sketch her own life with him, and, as climax, told of Red Kimball's deal with Gladstone.

From several of the intent listeners burst involuntary denunciations of Gladstone, while on the faces of others showed a momentary gleam of horror.

Red Kimball's confederate spoke loudly, harshly: "But who killed Red Kimball and his pard and the stage driver, if it wasn't Brick Willock?"

"I think it was Red Feather's band. I'm witness to the fact that Kimball agreed to bring Mr. Gladstone the pearl and onyx pin on condition that Mr. Gladstone appear against Brick. After Mr. Gladstone deserted Red Feather, or, rather, after her death, Red Feather carried that pin about him; Mr. Gladstone knew he'd never give it up alive. He was always afraid the Indian would find him—and at last he did find him. But Red Kimball got the pin—could that mean anything except that Kimball discovered the Indian's hiding place and killed him? But for that, I'd think it Red Feather who attacked the stage and killed Red Kimball. As it is, I believe it must have been his friend."

"Now you've said something!" cried

Mizoo. "Boys, don't you think that's a reasonable explanation?"

Some of them did, evidently, for the grim resolution on their faces softened; others, however, were unconvinced.

A stern voice was raised: "Brick Willock do his own explaining. Bill Atkins knows where he's hiding out—and we got to know. We've started in to be a law-abiding citizen, and that there warrant against Willock has got the right of way."

"Is there nothing I can say to move your hearts? Has my story of that pearl and onyx pin been lost on you? Couldn't you understand, after all? Are you Western men, and yet unable to feel the worth of a Western man like Brick? How he clothed me and sheltered me when the man who should have supported the child left in his care neglected her. How he taught me and was always tender and gentle—never a cross word—a man like that. And you think he could kill! I don't know whether he could kill! I don't know if he's a man or not. But if I knew it, do you think I'd let it? And if Bill betrayed him, but Bill wouldn't do it. Thank God, I've been raised with real men. I've seen how to stand by each other and be true to the death. You want Bill to turn traitor. I say, what kind of men are you?"

She turned to Willock, blinded by hot tears. "Oh, say something to them!" she gasped, clinging to his arm.

"Go on," murmured Willock. "I couldn't reach 'em, and you, my meddler, that time. Go on—don't give 'em a chance to think."

"But I can't—I've said all I had to say!"

"Don't stop, dear, for God's sake—the case is desperate! You'll have to do it—for Bill!"

"And that isn't all," Lahoma called in a broken pathetic voice, as she turned her pale face upon the curious crowd. "That isn't all. You know Brick and Bill have been all I had—all in this world. . . . You know they couldn't have been sweeter to me if they'd been the best of kin—they were more like women than men, cowboy, when they spoke to me and sat with me in the dugout—and I guess I know a little out a mother's love because I've always had Brick and Bill. But one day somebody else came to the cave and—this somebody else wants to marry me—to-day. This was the end of my journey," she went on blindly, "and there it is our wedding day. I thought there must be some way to get Brick to the wedding, but you see how it is. And—and we'll have to marry without him. But Bill's here—in that jail—because he wouldn't betray his friend. And I couldn't marry without either Brick or Bill, could I?"

She took her quivering hand from Willock's sturdy arm, and, moving to the top of the steps, held out her trembling arms appealingly:

"Men!—Give me Bill!"

The crowd was with her, now. No doubt of that. All her former doubts here and there, broadening into deep emotion, open admiration, touched with tenderness, in the end that took its breath away.

"You shall have Bill!" shouted the spokesman of the crowd. "And other voices cried: 'Give her Bill! Give her Bill!'"

"Bring him out!" continued the spokesman in stentorian tones. "We won't ask him a question. Follow, clear a path for 'em."

A broad lane was formed through the throng of smiling men who had suddenly, unexpected light of love had softened magically.

While Mizoo hastened to seize some one exclaimed, "Invite me, too. Make it a town wedding!"

And another started up the shout, "Hurrah for Lahoma!"

Lahoma, who had taken refuge behind Willock's protection, wept and laughed in a rosy glow of triumphant joy.

Mizoo presently reappeared, leaving the door wide open. He walked to the stairs, the wrinkles at the corners of his eyes deep cut with appreciation of the situation. "Follow," he called, "he says you carried him in here, and dinged if you won't have to carry him out, for not a step will he take."

At this unexpected development, a burst of laughter swelled into a roar. After that mighty merriment, Bill was as safe as a babe. Twenty volunteers pressed forward to carry the wedding guest from his cell. And when the old man slowly but proudly followed Willock and Lahoma to the hotel where certain preparations were to be made—particularly as touching Bill's personal appearance—the town of Mangum began gathering at the newly erected church which they had been invited.

When the four friends—for Mizoo joined them—drove up to the church door in the only carriage available, Bill descended stiffly, his eyes flashing fiercely from under heavy lids, as if daring any one to ask him a question about Brick. But Atkins did.